Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for transmission of a stream of data between first and second communications devices of a transmission system, the data being segmented into packets prior to transmission thereof, each of the packets comprising a header of a given size and a payload, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) at said first communications device, in the header in the stream of data, examining a predetermined data element and evaluating information therein to determine whether said information is available to said first and second communication devices, independently from information in other headers in the stream of data;

(b) if said information is available to said first and second communication devices, reducing the given size of the header prior to said transmission of packets by eliminating the predetermined data element therefrom to form a reduced header;

(c) transmitting said reduced header from said first of the two communications devices to said second communications device; and

(d) at said second communications device, restoring the given size of the said header when said reduced header so transmitted has been received by said second of the two communications devices by reconstituting said predetermined data element thereto.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 1, wherein the reconstituting of said predetermined data element is accomplished by the insertion into the reduced header of a bit having a value of zero.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 3, wherein error verification of the transmitted packet is conducted only in relation to bits forming part of the reduced header.

5. (Original) The method of transmission according to Claim 4, wherein the error verification is accomplished by encoding the reduced header with a header error check field.

6. (Original) The method of transmission according to Claim 5, wherein the error verification is computed by way of a Hamming code.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 6, wherein all headers transmitted from said first communications device are examined.

8. (Original) The method of transmission according to Claim 6, wherein the packets are cells of a fixed length.

9. (Original) The method of transmission according to Claim 8, wherein the cells are Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) cells.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 9, wherein

an additional data element is eliminated from said header; said data element and said additional data element comprise a Virtual Path Identifier (VPI) and a Virtual Channel Identifier (VCI);

said reduced header comprises a least significant portion of said VPI and a least significant portion of said VCI; and

the reconstituting of each predetermined data element includes adding a sufficient number of bits each having a value of zero to the portion of said VPI and the portion of the VCI.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 10, wherein

the header, prior to said eliminating of predetermined data elements therefrom, comprises a Generic Flow Control (GFC) field, the Generic Flow Control (GFC) field being eliminated to further form said reduced header; and the reconstituting of each predetermined data element

includes adding a sufficient number of bits each having a value of zero to the reduced header to reconstitute said GFC field.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 11, wherein the header error check field of said header prior to said eliminating of predetermined data elements therefrom and of said reduced header is a Header Error Check (HEC) field according to the Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) protocol.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of transmission according to Claim 11, wherein the header error check field of said header prior to said eliminating of predetermined data elements therefrom and of said reduced header is a Header Error Check (HEC) field according to the Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) protocol and in the case of the reduced headers is encoded on fewer than 8 bits.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of transmission according to Claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein the Header Error Check (HEC) field of the reduced headers is encoded on 5 bits.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of transmission according to Claim 14, wherein ~~the~~ each ~~selected number of headers~~ header to which the step of reducing is applied is ~~determined~~ identified on instructions received by the first communications device.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 14, wherein the predetermined data element is identified for elimination on instructions received by the first communications device.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 15, wherein said instructions are furnished by the second communications device.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The method of transmission according to Claim 15, wherein the said instructions are furnished by a network management device.

20. (Original) The method of transmission according to Claim 16, wherein the said instructions are furnished by a network management device.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for transmission of a stream of data to a communications device of a transmission system, the data being segmented into packets prior to transmission thereof, each of the packets comprising a header of a given size and a payload, the apparatus comprising a processor which

examines the header in the stream of data;

examines a predetermined data element therein;

evaluates information in said header to determine whether said information is available to said apparatus and said communication device, independently from information in other headers in the stream of data;

if said information is available to said apparatus and said communication device, causes the reduction the given size of the header prior to said transmission of packets by eliminating the predetermined data element therefrom to form a reduced header; and

controls transmitting said reduced header from apparatus.

24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for reception of a stream of data transmitted by a communications device in a transmission system, the data being segmented into packets prior to transmission thereof, each of the packets comprising a header of a given size and a payload, the given size of said header having been reduced by the communications device prior to said transmission of packets by evaluating information in said header to determine whether said information is available to said communication device and said apparatus independently from information in other headers in the stream of data, and if said information is available to said communications device and said apparatus, causing the reduction of the given size of the header prior to said transmission of packets by eliminating the ~~predetermined data element~~ said information therefrom to form a reduced header, the apparatus comprising

a processor which restores the given size of said header when said reduced header so transmitted has been received by the apparatus by reconstituting said ~~predetermined data element~~ eliminated information.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 10, wherein said additional data element relates to information selected from one of: a payload type; a cell loss priority; and a header error check.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 10, wherein said stream of data is examined for a header in on a periodic basis.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of transmission according to Claim 10, wherein said first and second communication devices negotiate before said first communication device examines said stream of data.